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by the way, he has introduced himself unbidden; in others we catch intimate glimpses behind the scenes of Caesar, Cicero, and Ovid, and many others of our favorites. Messalina appears as an altogether charming but outrageously misunderstood and sinned-against lady. Nero is an agreeable, business-like, gentlemanly and scholarly fellow, albeit a bit cruel toward the Jews and Christians; and Marcus Aurelius is a prim, Puritanical saint—and sissy. He cannot understand how the Christians can be so unreasonable as to refuse to obey his perfectly proper request for conformity. "It is not as if we had ever forced a pious man to commit an impious action or to say a shameful thing. But it is quite a different thing when a man is ordered to celebrate the Sun or to sing a beautiful hymn in honor of Athene." His empress also thinks the Christians are horrid. She says it is disgraceful that in the present enlightened age people should be allowed to cover children with flour, to massacre, and to eat them. She knows they do this, for she has had it on the best authority; in fact, her maid knows someone who has seen them do it.

Lest the unwary be misled into accepting all these things as gospel truth just because they see them in print, the author warns them that much of what he has written is but the "chaff of fancy," intermingled, it is true, with grains of historical truth. But, however fanciful they are, the letters are still so seeming true that he who reads them with a background of knowledge will with safety and much joy give himself up to their perusal.

F. J. MILLER

The Comedies of Terence. Edited with Introduction and Notes by SIDNEY G. ASHMORE. New York: Oxford University Press, American Branch, 1908. Pp. viii+68+289+340.

Within comparatively small compass Professor Ashmore has succeeded in giving the essentials of the text criticism and interpretation of the six extant plays. This book is well adapted for use in advanced courses in which several of the comedies are read.

The Introduction contains a treatment of the development of Roman comedy, the life and works of Terence, his influence upon literature, the characters portrayed in his plays, dramatic representations in Rome, meters, early Latin prosody, and such other topics as are usually included in the introductory essays of college editions of the Latin poets. The text and the critical apparatus at the foot of the page are adopted from the edition of Tyrrell in the *Bibliotheca Oxoniensis*. Some changes, however, have been introduced, and the more troublesome passages have been discussed in brief critical appendices at the end of the commentary on each play. The subject-matter of the commentary has been selected with good judgment. Difficulties have been met fairly, and the amount of superfluous or decorative matter has been reduced to a minimum. The editor has wisely refrained from encumbering

his notes with parallel references to all the American grammars. When a reference has been necessary he has chosen "the grammar which seemed to throw the clearest light on the difficulty in question." The references are to Allen and Greenough, Bennett, Hale and Buck, Gildersleeve-Lodge, Harkness, or Roby.

The tone of the whole book is strikingly conservative. Professor Ashmore shows that he is familiar with the work of contemporary scholars, but makes it equally clear that he has no special weakness for running after strange gods. Where he must choose between a new view and an old one, he chooses the latter unless the evidence advanced in support of the new theory amounts to a positive demonstration. The elimination of the sporting chance is apparently one of the first articles of his editorial creed. This is on the whole the safe course; it has the advantage of excluding new errors. It does not, however, tend to reduce the old errors, of which in every author there is of necessity a vast ruck. Moreover, one must remember that many of the traditional views won recognition on evidence quite as incomplete as that advanced in support of more recent interpretations. For example, in discussing the origin of comedy (Introduction, p. 9) Ashmore adopts the old view, which postulates the existence of a dramatic *satura*, and dismisses Hendrickson's theory (*A.J.P.*, XV) in a few words, on the ground that it has "failed to win general acceptance." Whether Hendrickson has established his thesis or not, he has certainly demonstrated clearly the flimsiness of the evidence upon which the traditional view is based. The question is one of those which has not yet been thoroughly thrashed out, and finality of judgment is precluded. It is, I understand, soon to be the subject of renewed discussion. The same conservatism is shown on p. 41: "in the old Attic Comedy the number of actors employed in a single drama was limited to three," a statement which disregards entirely the conclusions of Rees in his recent monograph, *The So-Called Rule of Three Actors in the Classical Greek Drama*; and in the section on prosody (p. 59) it is the old scansion that is given, *illē quēm* (*Ad.* 72) and *illē qui illam* (*Phorm.* 109), in spite of the strong case made out for *ill'* by Skutsch. See also Sommer, *Handbuch der lateinischen Laut- und Formenlehre* (Heidelberg, 1902), p. 166. The statement on p. 58 of the Introduction that "in Terence final -s invariably fails to make position" is apparently a slip.

In comparison with the number of points treated in the commentary relatively few statements are open to question. Some inaccuracies, however, occur. On p. 55 it is stated that "the door to which words like *crepare* apply did not open directly on the street, but into a passage, at the other end of which was the street door." No evidence is cited in support of the existence of the door referred to in the last clause of the sentence quoted. All that we know of the ancient house tends to show that the door which opened into the passage was the street door. On p. 166 we are told that *ut mihi liceat*, etc., is a clause of purpose. It does not, however, give the purpose of *morte depecisci*, but the condition. The subjunctive is stipulative. On p. 169 *vix tandem*

is correctly translated "at last," but in the absence of a closer analysis of the phrase students will certainly miss the force of *vix*. *Tandem* expresses Geta's surprise that Demipho had mentioned Antipho's name before his; *vix* indicates that his name had just escaped being passed over entirely. On p. 170 (*Phorm.* 265) the editor follows Hauler in calling *noris* . . . *noris* future perfect indicative, but in both cases *noris* is the subjunctive, which in the second singular indefinite is regularly used both in generalizing clauses and in independent general statements of facts. See Hale's article in *Class. Phil.*, I, 21 ff. There is another example of this usage in *Phorm.* 341 f., *tu rideas*, etc., which our editor incorrectly explains as "a kind of *oratio obliqua*, a sort of quotation of the courtesies rendered by the *rex*." On p. 171 the note "*hōc* (nom. and accus. sing.) is long" will lead students to believe that the vowel, and not merely the syllable, is long.

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